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Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 01444 301934Z
ACTION NODS-00

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S E C R E T MOSCOW 1444

NODIS/CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: SALT, US, UR, XW
SUBJECT: KORNIYENKO ON SALT AND HORN OF AFRICA

REF: (A) STATE 23803, (B) MOSCOW 1406

1. DURING JANUARY 30 CALL ON FIRSTY DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER KORNIYENKO TO DELIVER THE TEXT OF THE PRESIDENT'S JANUARY 25 LETTER (REF B), HE OFFERED THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON SECRETARY'S JANUARY 27 DISCUSSION WITH DOBRYNIN.

2. SALT. KORNIYENKO SAID THAT HE WAS ENCOURAGED BY SECRETARY'S ASSURANCES THAT ADMINISTRATION INTENDS TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY AND EXPEDITIOUSLY ON SALT TREATY, SINCE PONOMAREV DELEGATION HAD RECEIVED IMPRESSION FROM CONVERSATIONS ON HILL THAT THIS MIGHT NOT BE THE CASE. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT SOVIETS HAVE FEELING THAT THEIR RECENT CONCESSIONS HAVE NOT BEEN RECIPROCATED. U.S. SIMPLY SAYS "THANK YOU VERY MUCH," POCKETS THE SOVIET CONCESSIONS, AND MAKES NO ATTEMPT TO MOVE TOWARD SOVIET POSITION. KORNIYENKO SAID THAT HE COULD NOT FAIL TO TAKE NOTE OF THIS. CHANRGE COMMENTED THAT IN OUR VIEW WE HAVE MADE SUBSTANTIAL EFFORTS TO MEET SOVIETS HALF WAY AND THAT IT IS NOT CORRECT TO SPEAK EXCLUSIVELY OF SOVIET CONCESSIONS. THE SECRETARY, HE SAID, HAD
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LISTED FOR DOBRYNIN THE MAIN ISSUES WHICH REMAIN AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT SOVIETS WOULD TAKE NOTE OF OUR POSITIONS AND ALLOW THE NEGOTIATIONS TO PROCEED RAPIDLY TO A CONCLUSION.

3. HORN. KORNIYENKO SAID THAT RECENT U.S. STATEMENTS, INCLUDING SECRETARY'S TO PONOMAREREV AND DOBRYNIN,

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AMOUNTED TO A REPETITION OF CONCERN REGARDING SOVIET
AND CUBAN AID TO ETHIOPIA, COUPLED WITH A GENERAL EXPRESSION
OF HOPE FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. AT THE SAME TIME, THE
U.S. FAILS TO COME OUT WITH A CLEAR-CUT CONDEMNATION OF
SOMALI AGRESSION OR WITH A CALL FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF
SOMALI FORCES FROM THE OGADEN. THE SOMALIS, HE SAID,
NOW CONTROL 90 PERCENT OF THE OGADEN AREA, AND THE ETHIOPIANS
HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT THERE CAN BE NO PEACEFUL SOLUTION
SO LONG AS THERE ARE SOMALI FORCES IN ETHIOPIA. OF
COURSE, HE ADDED, IT IS USEFUL FOR THE U.S. AND USSR
TO EXCHANGE OPINIONS, BUT THE SOVIET POSITION IS CLEAR:
THE SOMALIS HAVE INVADED ETHIOPIA AND SHOULD WITHDRAW.
UNTIL THEY DO THE SOVIETS CAN NOT ADVISE THE ETHIOPIANS
"TO SIT FOR TEN YEARS AS THE ARABS HAVE AFTER ISRAELI
OCCUPATION OF THEIR TERRITORIES AND TAKE NO STEPS TO
RECOVER THEIR LAND."

4. CHARGE ASKED WHETHER HE SHOULD INFER FROM KORNIYENKO'S
REMARKS THAT SOVIETS SEE NO POSSIBILITY AT PRESENT FOR
A SETTLEMENT BY NEGOTIATION. KORNIYENKO AVOIDED
DIRECT ANSWER BUT ASKED THETORICALLY HOW THERE CAN BE
NEGOTIATIONS SO LONG AS SOMALI TROOPS OCCUPY ETHIOPIAN
TERRITORY. SUPPOSE MEXICO, HE CONTINUED, SENT TROOPS TO
NEW MEXICO AND DEMANDED THE STATE? THE U.S. WOULD
CERTAINLY NOT NEGOTIATE WITH MEXICO. "SUCH A PROPOSAL WOULD
BE ABSURD," HE CONCLUDED.
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5. COMMENT: KORNIYENKO'S COMMENTS ON THESE SUBJECTS WERE
PRELIMINARY AND DEFENSIVE. GIVEN GROMYKO'S REPORTED ABSENCE
AT THIS TIME - NOT TO MENTION BREZHNEV'S AT LEAST QUASI-
DISENGAGEMENT FROM AFFAIRS - IT IS MOST UNLIKELY THAT THE
SECRETARY'S COMMENTS HAVE YET BEEN GIVEN FULL CONSIDERATION
BY DECISION MAKERS.
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